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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BAGHDAD 001831

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: REACTION TO UNAMI DISPUTED INTERNAL BOUNDARIES  
FIRST PHASE AND NEXT STEPS

REF: A. BAGHDAD UNCLASSIFIED OI JUNE 9 (KNA STATEMENT)

[1](#)B. BAGHDAD 1743 (BARHAM SALIH IN DIBS)

[1](#)C. BAGHDAD 1733 (UNAMI DIBS PHASE ONE)

Classified By: Senior Adviser Thomas Krajieski for reasons 1.4 (b,d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Senior Adviser's June 10-12 talks with Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) leaders in Erbil following United Nations Assistance Mission to Iraq (UNAMI)'s submission to the GOI and KRG of its initial Disputed Internal Boundaries (DIBs) reports on June 5 revealed general dissatisfaction with the reports' methodology and with some of its details. KRG President Massoud Barzani and other interlocutors demonstrated a well-coordinated and united front of disappointment, but all expressed a desire to see the UNAMI process through to its final phase so that the leadership can review the entire package, particularly Kirkuk. Senior Adviser avoided a point-by-point debate on some of their detailed complaints, told them to take advantage of the framework offered by UNAMI's reports to engage all parties on a serious discussion of the demarcation of the internal boundaries of the KRG and reminded them that it was ultimately a GOI/KRG decision. Reaction from other communities is much less detailed, with Sunni Arab rejecting UNAMI's role and the validity of Article 140 of the Iraqi Constitution, while Kirkuk-based Turkmen bloc leaders called for Article 140 to be implemented rather than using UNAMI's assistance. UNAMI echoed what we are hearing about Arab, Turkmen and other reaction and told us that in detailed discussions with Kurdish leaders, it was agreed that they would modify their phase one reports to include greater acknowledgment of Kurdish suffering and their useful role in security, but the Kurds understood that UNAMI would not change any of its key findings. Kurdish leadership presented its official response to UNAMI on June 16, and plans to issue a press release (coordinated with UNAMI) to detail its disagreements. UNAMI will work on the other disputed territories and the status of Kirkuk (Phases Two and Three) in the coming weeks and will present both at the same time, possibly by August.

[1](#)2. (C) Summary, cont: From June 10-12, Senior Adviser Krajieski met with Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) President Massoud Barzani (KDP), KRG Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani (KDP), KRG Minister of Interior Karim Sinjari (KDP), KRG Head of Intelligence Services (Paristin) Masrur Barzani (KDP), KRG Deputy Prime Minister Omer Fatah (PUK), Kurdistan National Assembly (KNA) Speaker Kemal Kirkuki and other KNA representatives and the Erbil Governor. Primary discussion centered around United Nations Assistance Mission to Iraq (UNAMI)'s provision to the Presidency Council, Iraqi Prime Minister and KRG Prime Minister of its initial Phase One reports on the DIBs process (ref C). On June 14, Senior Adviser met with United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) Staffan de Mistura and UNAMI Deputy SRSG Andrew Gilmour, with a follow-up meeting with Gilmour on June 17.

Kurds Detail Disagreements but  
Will Wait for UNAMI Package to Be Complete  
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13. (C) In comments echoed by others in the KRG, KRG President Massoud Barzani told Senior Adviser that he was "very disappointed" in the first UNAMI reports, but that he would wait to see the entire series, including Kirkuk, before he would make a deal on any of the disputed territories. "I want to see what we will get," Massoud said. Massoud and others, particularly Kurdistan National Assembly Speaker Kemal Kirkuki and KRG Head of Intelligence Services (Paristin) Masrur Barzani (KDP), commented that the Kurds could organize a referendum "within a week," but when pressed, admitted that they preferred not to risk a hostile referendum that would fail to gain recognition by the international community. Massoud detailed the history of Kurdish attempts to resolve Kirkuk and warned that his "patience was wearing thin." At the same time, both Massoud and KRG Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani said they understood that overall resolution to the issue would require give and take. In terms of overall disagreement with UNAMI's reports, our interlocutors made the following general points:

-- that the KRG was unjustly portrayed as the cause of the problem when in fact KRG had offered security and services where there were none (in Sinjar and Hamdaniya districts in Ninewa especially);

-- that the reports failed to recognize the KRG's cooperation in fighting terrorism and violence;

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-- that the reports failed to make sufficient reference to the decades of violence and injustice against the Kurds;

-- that UNAMI changed the basis of its reports from concentrating mostly on the 2005 elections results to include many additional factors, without informing the KRG, thereby going beyond its mandate.

14. (C) Regarding the individual district reports, Kurdish interlocutors complained about the inclusion of Akre district in the disputed territories, arguing that the Iraqi Constitution's acknowledgment of the validity of Article 53A of the Transitional Administrative Law meant that Akre was already above the "green line" and part of the KRG (refs B and C). Several, particularly KNA Speaker Kirkuki, argued that Qaraj sub-district was an integral part of Makhmour district and should not be separated from it because a couple of "Arab terrorists" talked to UNAMI. Concomitantly, several interlocutors claimed that since Qaraj might be separated, then the sub-district of Mandali ought to be divided as well.

Security is Vital, Particularly for Minorities  
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15. (C) KRG Minister of Interior Karim Sinjari and KRG Head of Intelligence Services (Paristin) Masrur Barzani (KDP) in particular emphasized concern about security, especially in Hamdaniya district in Ninewa, where Sinjari said the Christian minority there feared that UNAMI's plan would leave them defenseless. Senior Advisor stressed our paramount concern regarding the security of minorities, and the need for the KRG to work closely with the GOI to ensure that security was maintained during any future administrative transfer in Hamdaniya.

Sunni Arabs and Turkmen Also Dismiss DIBs Reports  
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16. (C) Members of the Turkmen bloc of the Kirkuk Provincial

Council told Kirkuk PRT leader on June 8 that they disapproved of UNAMI's Phase One proposal, claiming that resolution to disputed territories and the status of Kirkuk must follow the Iraqi Constitution and that the UN's involvement was "illegal." Turkmen members complained about Akre district, claiming that Akre has only been Kurdish since 1991, and said they felt that they had no input into Phase One (note: which did not address any territory in Kirkuk) because UNAMI did not spend enough time talking to Kirkuk-based Turkmen.

¶7. (C) Sunni Arab reaction has been relatively straightforward, with those few who bothered commenting on the reports claiming that UNAMI's assistance was not valid and that Article 140 of the Iraqi Constitution was "dead." For example, Council of Representatives (COR) member Falah Zaydan (Hewar, Sunni Arab) announced that he had a petition signed by more the 90 COR members rejecting UNAMI's mandate and calling Article 140 invalid. UNAMI told us, however, that such Sunni Arab leaders as Salah Mutlaq (National Iraqi Front, Sunni Arab), in addition to a public rejection, also sent UNAMI a letter detailing suggestions for how to deal with Article 140 issues. Thus far, GOI Vice President Tariq al-Hashimi, who received a copy of the reports on June 5, has not commented publicly or privately on the reports. For that matter, nor has Prime Minister Maliki commented.

#### UNAMI Stays Flexible; Lays Out Next Steps

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¶8. (C) UNAMI SRSG de Mistura told us that he had met with several Kurdish leaders in Baghdad the evening of June 8, including DPM Barham Salih and Foreign Minister Zebari, and that he believed that their "attitude" looked better and more moderate than what Salih told Senior Adviser Krajewski earlier on June 8 (ref B), including an agreement that while the Kurds would continue to criticize the reports publicly, they would not stop their support for UNAMI's efforts. De Mistura told us June 14 that he had reminded them that these reports gave the Kurds momentum on an issue that the GOI had historically ignored or slow-rolled, that there were some benefits in terms of influencing resolution to other key issues like hydrocarbons and elections and that a hostile referendum would not get the Kurds what they want, nor would it have international legitimacy.

¶9. (C) Several meetings between UNAMI and Kurdish leaders followed and Gilmour told us on June 17 that UNAMI had agreed to add a few points to its Phase One reports, including

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¶10. (C) Regarding next steps, Gilmour said they agreed to informally share more information with interlocutors as reports on the rest of the disputed territories and the status of Kirkuk are developed in the coming weeks, with the goal of the end of August as an informal deadline to present both phases two and three together as a package to the 3 2.

#### Comment

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¶11. (C) Very few non-Kurds appear to have read the reports in detail, preferring to reject them out of hand. UNAMI had been careful to present its phase one reports in a balanced way -- to avoid one-sided reaction that could have scuttled their efforts right at the beginning. The overall negative reaction to its reports may actually be a good thing. Arab parties that believed UNAMI would simply hand over all disputed territories to the KRG have been proved mistaken, and the Kurds are now confronting the need to make a real deal rather than just talking generalities about it. In the end, this process is all about Kirkuk, and the oil beneath it. A separate deal on sharing oil revenue may well provide the grease needed to reach an agreement on disputed boundaries.

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